

it fought for civil rights and justice, maybe we will stand in this body and also answer the call for equal justice. We will pass real campaign finance reform, and we will have a tobacco bill that will protect our children. I hope that their call is not in vain and that it will not be silenced by the pondering of our voices and by the overwhelming special interests that try to strangle democracy in this House.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) is recognized for 5 minutes. (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DAVIS of Illinois addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SCARBOROUGH) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. SCARBOROUGH addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. METCALF) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. METCALF addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

U.S. SUPPORT FOR PEACE AND STABILITY IN THE CAUCASUS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, yesterday two of my colleagues, Mr. KENNEDY of Massachusetts and Mr. KENNEDY of Rhode Island and I met with Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbot and other top State Department officials to discuss the resolution of the conflict in Nagorno Karabagh, a state in the southern Caucasus region of the former Soviet Union. Our goal was to try to develop some new ideas on how we can work to promote greater cooperation and stability in this strategically-located region.

Although the State Department clearly considers Nagorno Karabagh to be of the utmost importance, my colleagues and I are concerned the U.S. diplomatic efforts have either stalled or are going in the wrong direction. We are concerned that our diplomatic priorities are being eclipsed by commercial interests in the region and that the traditional American mission of promoting democracy is being diverted by the desire to develop oil resources.

Secretary Talbot and his colleagues from the Department of State who met with us were most gracious, I should say, but there are differences between the State Department and those of us in this Congress who are staunch supporters of Armenia and Nagorno Karabagh.

And, Mr. Speaker, as I have mentioned in this House on several occasions, the people of Nagorno Karabagh fought and won a war of independence from Azerbaijan. A tenuous ceasefire has been in place since 1994, but a more lasting settlement has been elusive. The United States has been involved in a major way in the negotiations intended to produce a just and lasting peace. Our country is a co-chair along with France and Russia of the international negotiating group commonly known as the Minsk group formed to seek a solution to the Nagorno Karabagh conflict. Pro Armenian Members of this House welcome the high profile U.S. role in this process. As I have indicated, we have some substantive differences.

Unfortunately the State Department is most reluctant to drop its support for Azerbaijan's claim of so-called territorial integrity despite the fact that Nagorno Karabagh has been inhabited by Armenians for centuries.

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I would say, Mr. Speaker, it is time for the U.S. and our Minsk Group partners to forget about the idea of Azerbaijan's so-called "territorial integrity" as the foundation for peacefully resolving this conflict.

In the first place, given Nagorno Karabagh's autonomous status in the old Soviet system, there is no reason why they must be considered part of Azerbaijan. But more importantly, Mr. Speaker, the people of Nagorno Karabagh do not consider themselves to be a part of Azerbaijani society. And, considering the horrible treatment visited upon the people of Karabagh and the Armenian community in Azerbaijan proper, it is apparent to me that Azerbaijan really has no use for the people of Karabagh.

The State Department officials that we met with yesterday seemed to be open to new ideas coming from the parties to the conflict, and that created a certain amount of optimism. They stressed that if Armenia, Azerbaijan and Nagorno Karabagh all agreed on a status for Nagorno Karabagh that left it free of Azeri suzerainty, the United States would go along. There was a clear understanding on the part of the State Department that the earlier Minsk Group proposal that did not address the status issue was no longer acceptable to Armenia or Nagorno Karabagh.

Mr. Chairman, as we stressed at yesterday's meeting, our top priority should be to push for direct negotiations, involving Nagorno Karabagh and Azerbaijan, without preconditions. And I should add that any proposal that

starts with the premise that the map of Azerbaijan must include Nagorno Karabagh is a big precondition.

As a first step, Mr. Speaker, I would stress the importance of strengthening the current, shaky cease-fire as a priority for the Minsk Group. Making a priority of securing the cease-fire would help end the violence, stop the continuing casualties, and help build confidence for further agreements between the parties.

I believe we should also consider the idea of "horizontal links," a federation between Azerbaijan and Nagorno Karabagh among equals. This model has been used in resolving the Bosnia war and in the current negotiations aimed at resolving the Cyprus conflict.

Another key is the need for security guarantees for Karabagh. As I mentioned, Karabagh won the war and holds the strategic advantage. But it is unrealistic and unfair to expect Karabagh to give up its gains on the battlefield for vague promises at the negotiating table by the United States or the other Minsk Group co-chairs.

Finally, let me say, Mr. Speaker, that America's role should be that of a nonbiased mediator. It is a role that we have played honorably and with great success in conflicts raging from the Middle East to Bosnia and to Northern Ireland, and there should be no difference here in the case of Karabagh.

POSSIBLE CURES FOR ABUSES IN MANAGED CARE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HAYWORTH). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 1997, the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. GANSKE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. GANSKE. Mr. Speaker, it has been a long day here in the House with a lot of debate about campaign finance reform, and as our colleagues on the other side of the Capitol have been debating for almost 4 weeks until it ended yesterday, a debate on tobacco legislation, which appears to be at least significantly set back. We have a debate going on on campaign finance reform which is much needed, and it appears as if we may have a 3 or 4 week debate on that as well. I hope that the outcome comes out better than that.

But I want to speak tonight about another issue that has been bottled up in Congress for a couple of years that has broad bipartisan support, something that is very important to our constituents back home and to every American, and that is the issue of abuses in managed care and whether we ought to have some minimum standards, Federal safety standards for managed care.

I frequently hear my colleagues who oppose this saying, well, let us not legislate by anecdote. I mean, heaven forbid that we should ever in this body legislate by anecdote. The problem is that these anecdotes are real people, and they are all over the country, and